MARVEL

DEATH SPIRAL

PART 9 OF 9

27

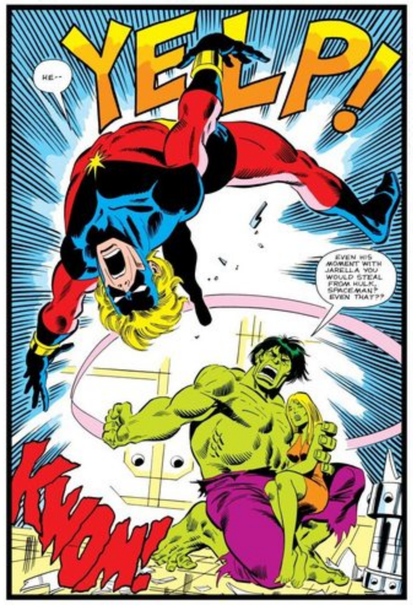
LGY#991

RATED T

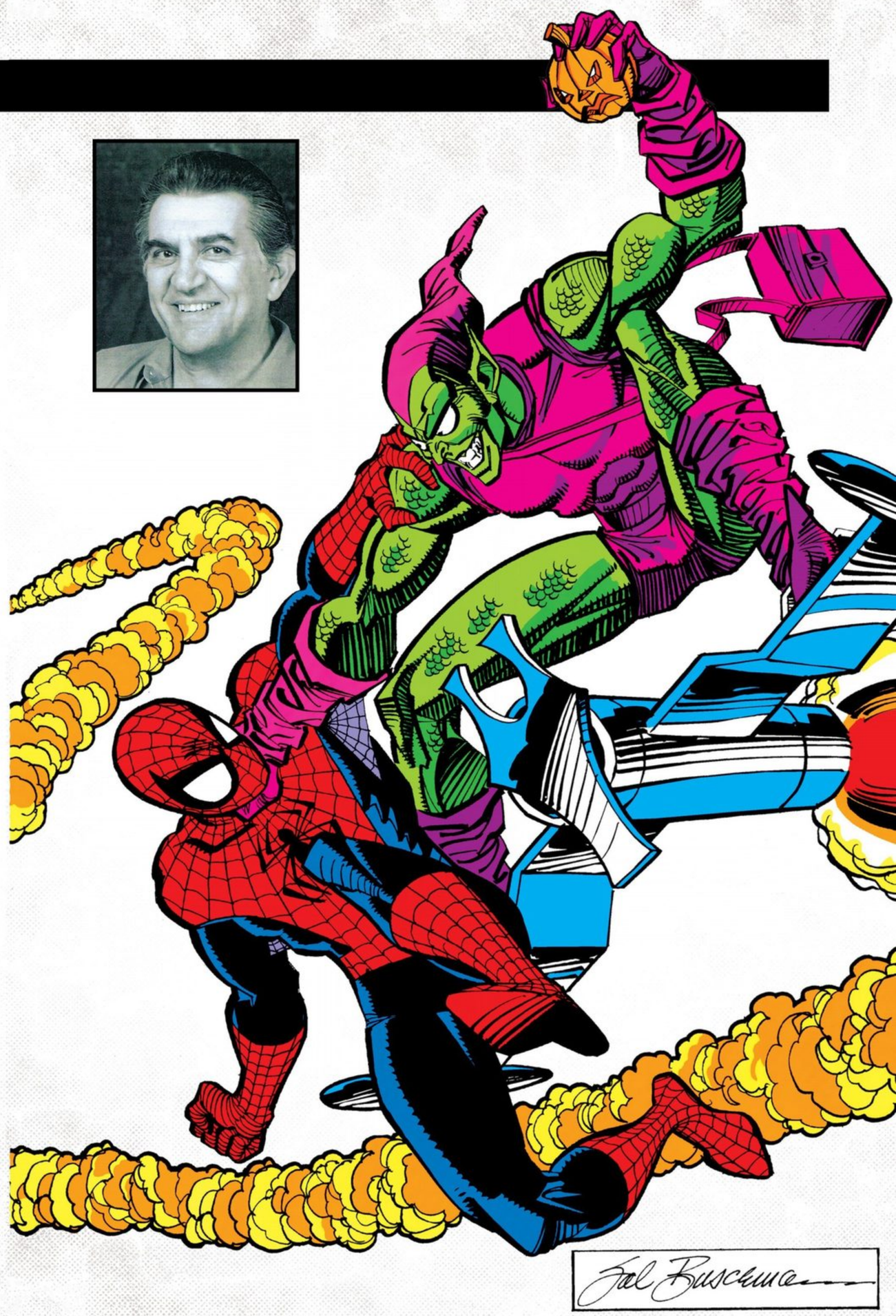
the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN CARNAGE

KELLY
McGUINNESS
GÓMEZ
MENYZ

SAL BUSCEMA
1936-2026



Marvel pauses to remember Sal Buscema, a foundational Marvel artist since 1969. Buscema was a prolific penciler and inker, working on nearly every Marvel character. His clear, dynamic storytelling was a feature of long, historic runs on *Spectacular Spider-Man*, *Incredible Hulk* and *Rom*. Buscema was famed for drawing bombastic roundhouse punches that sent characters sprawling across the page, but he could also be capable of great subtlety and emotion in his character acting. "Our Pal Sal" will be missed by generations of Marvel fans.



IT TAKES JUST A MILLISECOND FOR *CARNAGE* TO *INFILTRATE* MY MIND... MY *VERY BEING.*

HUH. SO INSTEAD OF BATTERIES, YOU RUN ON *DOUBT* AND *GUILT?*

NEVER HEARD OF 'EM.

LET ME INTRODUCE YOU INSTEAD...TO *PURPOSE* AND *JOY.*

THE STRENGTH OF HIS RESOLVE IS *OVERWHELMING.* ONE WORD... OVER AND OVER.

KILL.

HE EXISTS *ONLY* TO KILL.

IN *FAIRNESS,* I *ALSO* EXIST TO MAIM, TORTURE, MURDER, SUNDER, RIP, TEAR, FLAY...

FLAYING IS REALLY FUN WHEN THE STRIPS GET LONG...LIKE STRING CHEESE. YUM.

WHY DON'T YOU PONDER HOW COMPLEX AND *MULTIFACETED* I AM? LIKE, TO YOURSELF.

I'LL HANDLE THE WET BUSINESS OUT HERE.

YOU ARE A FICKLE FRIEND.

BONDED WITH CARNAGE, I KNOW *EVERYTHING* ABOUT HIS GAME WITH TORMENT.

SO MANY PEOPLE, MURDERED IN MY NAME... *MJ'S... EDDIE'S.*

ALL TO *"CLOSE THE SPIRAL."*

WE-- I DON'T KILL.

SO I'VE HEARD. I GOT YOU.

IT'S MY BODY. I--

YOU'RE GONNA HEMORRHAGE ALL OVER IF I DON'T STAY ON AND KEEP YOU *TOGETHER.*

SYMBIOSIS, REMEMBER? I THOUGHT YOU WERE THE SMART ONE.

DISENGAGE FROM ME, YOU'RE GONNA BLEED OUT AND DIE.

THEN WHO'S GONNA SAVE THE OLD BAGS OF BONES?

PETER PARKER HAS THE PROPORTIONAL SPEED, STRENGTH, AND AGILITY OF A SPIDER, ADHESIVE FINGERTIPS AND TOES, AND THE UNIQUE PRECOGNITIVE AWARENESS OF DANGER CALLED "SPIDER-SENSE"! AFTER THE TRAGIC DEATH OF HIS UNCLE BEN, PETER PARKER UNDERSTOOD THAT WITH GREAT POWER THERE MUST ALSO COME GREAT RESPONSIBILITY. HE BECAME THE CRIMEFIGHTING SUPER HERO CALLED...

the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN

CARNAGE SET **TORMENT**, A SERIAL KILLER WHO MURDERS HIS WAY THROUGH HIS VICTIMS' FAMILIES BEFORE KILLING THE VICTIM, ON A TRIUNE CHALLENGE WITH **PETER PARKER**, **EDDIE BROCK**, AND **MARY JANE WATSON**. WHEN EDDIE TRIED TO STOP HIS BONDED SYMBIOTE CARNAGE, THE RED SYMBIOTE ABANDONED HIM TO BOND WITH TORMENT, LEAVING EDDIE TO DIE! VENOM AND EDDIE'S SON **DYLAN BROCK** RUSHED TO SAVE EDDIE, WHILE SPIDER-MAN CHASED DOWN TORMENTAGE, BUT NEITHER SPIDEY NOR **AGENT ANTI-VENOM**--WHO MJ SENT TO PROTECT PETER'S **AUNT MAY** AND MJ'S **AUNT ANNA**--COULD SLOW TORMENT DOWN. ULTIMATELY, TORMENT BROKE HIS BOND WITH CARNAGE OVER CARNAGE'S INDISCRIMINATE MURDER PHILOSOPHY AND CONTINUED ON HIS OBSESSIVE QUEST. CARNAGE, MEANWHILE, FOUND A NEW HOST... SPIDER-MAN HIMSELF. ENTER...**SPIDER-CARNAGE!**

SPIDER-MAN A.K.A. PETER PARKER

AMAZING
SPIDER-MAN/VENOM
DEATH SPIRAL

PART 9 OF 9

VENOM A.K.A. MARY JANE WATSON

JOE KELLY
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INKERS
MARCIO MENYZ & ERICK ARCINIEGA
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LETTERER

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MARK BAGLEY & DEAN WHITE (CLASSIFIED TARGET);
DAVID NAKAYAMA (COLOR BLOCK);
DANIELE DI NICUOLO & BRYAN VALENZA;
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EDITOR IN CHIEF

SPIDER-MAN CREATED BY
STAN LEE & STEVE DITKO

CARNAGE A.K.A. EDDIE BROCK

AUNT MAY? ANNA? WE HAVE TO SAVE THEM... BUT NOT BY KILLING--

BUT NOTHING. TRUST ME-- GAME KNOWS GAME, PETEY.

TORMENT IS A CONTENDER FOR TOP BODY COUNT OF THE DECADE. YOUR SWEET LITTLE AUNTIES ARE ABOUT TO PUT HIM OVER THE TOP!

BWMMMMP

THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY.

NO!

COME ON! I CAN FEEL IT IN YOU!

ANGER.

NO, STOP--

YOU'RE TIRED OF LOSING TO MANIACS LIKE THIS, AREN'T YOU?

THE GREEN GOBLIN...? HELLGATE?

I'M GOING TO *HELP YOU* WITH THAT.

I'M GONNA MAKE YOU ***STRONG***. YOU JUST NEED A PUSH... OR IN THIS CASE...

...A PULL.

NO!

SCHRIPPT!

AAAARGH!

I TOLD YOU FLAYING IS COOL.

WE'RE GONNA HAVE A LOT OF FUN TOGETHER.

CHOMP

WHMMMP

SPIDER-MAN!

WHY ARE WE SAVING A SERIAL KILLER FROM SPIDER-MAN?

SPLTT

WHOULFF!

PETER'S NOT HERE ANYMORE, DAD.

OH NO.

AAAARGH!

SLI

GH

ARE YOU--?

PISSED? VERY.

HOW DO WE FIX PETER?

FIX HIM?! HE'S LIVING HIS BEST LIFE IN ONE OF THE BEST BODS I'VE EVER ROCKED.

FOR OLD TIMES' SAKE, I'M GIVING YOU A CHANCE... LETHALLY PROTECT WITH ME?

FFFFFT

GLRP

PETER! GET BACK IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT!

THIS... IS A WORLD OF MONSTERS.

OKAY, THEN SHARED CUSTODY!

SPIDEY CAN PLAY "SUPER HERO" ONCE A WEEK--SUPERVISED, OF COURSE--AND WE'LL BE OFF DOING THE MURDERS THE REST OF THE TIME.

YOU CAN'T WIN. HE'LL TAKE BACK CONTROL--!

MAYBE... OR MAYBE, IF I SPILL SOME BLOOD WHILE HE'S DAZED...?

TORMENT'S... THE AUNTIES'...? MAYBE HE WON'T RECOVER FROM THAT.

AND MAYBE... DEFINITELY, HE'LL BE MINE.

NO!

WAIT... MAY--

YOU HAVE TO HURRY, ANNA! IF WE GET TO THE *OFFICE*, WE CAN--

DIE IN THE OFFICE?

SORRY TO KEEP YOU *WAITING*, LADIES...

I LOST MY *FOCUS* A BIT.

"I FIND THE TIES OF FAMILY SO *INTOXICATING*...

"THOSE OF BIRTH... CHOICE... *FATE*.

"THREADS THAT ALWAYS WEAVE INTO A *NOOSE*, GIVEN TIME.

"*THEY* MAY BE MONSTERS, BUT IN THE END, WE'RE ALL JUST *ANIMALS*."

#$%& YOU, CARNAGE.

WHAT HE SAID. *HEH.*

ALL OF A SUDDEN, IT'S ***QUIET*** IN HERE AGAIN. TIME TO TAKE CARNAGE TO SCHOOL.

EDDIE...?

YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE ALMOST DEAD IN A HOSPITAL BED?!

WHAT THE HELL'S WRONG WITH THAT GUY?! WHY DID HE RUN IN THERE?!

MY DAD JUST...***REALLY*** LOVES FAMILY FUN NIGHT.

YOU THINK I'M *WEAK* BECAUSE I DON'T WANT TO KILL.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING?! STOP!

TEACHING YOU A LESSON IN *STRENGTH.*

YOU TRIED TO DROWN ME IN ANGER, PAIN, AND DEATH. LIKE I'M A *CHILD* WHO DOESN'T KNOW HOW THE WORLD WORKS.

BUT KILLING AN ENEMY INSTEAD OF TRYING TO *HELP* THEM. BOWING TO ANIMAL RAGE AND *RIGHTEOUS* ANGER...BEING YOU...?

THAT'S *CHILDISH. WEAKNESS.*

AGREE TO DISAGREE! I'M GONNA JUMP SHIP AND--

HURT SOMEONE ELSE? *NO.*

YOU WANTED ME... YOU *GOT* ME. ALL OF ME.

ARE YOU STRONG ENOUGH TO HANDLE IT?

HOPE? LOVE? SIMPLE EVERYDAY *JOY* IN A WORLD THAT CAN ALSO BE *BRUTAL?*

GO ON, TOUGH GUY... TAKE A LOOK AND SHOW ME HOW *STRONG* YOU ARE.

W-WAIT! IF YOU DON'T LET ME OUT, YOUR *AUNT'S* GOING TO *DIE!*

NAH... I *TRUST* MY FRIENDS.

BECAUSE WE *LOVE EACH OTHER.*

STOP IT, STOP IT, STOP IT!

NO ONE ELSE... DIES...

STOP HELP HELP NO THE LIGHT I CAN'T THE LIGHT HELP!

GIVE IT A REST, YOU BABY.

ANTI-VENOM... GLAD YOU'RE NOT DEAD.

IS CARNAGE...?

I DON'T KNOW. WE'LL GET HIM IN A *TUBE* AND SEE.

=KOFF= VENOM...?

THEY'RE AFTER ***TORMENT.*** NO MORE SYMBIOTE. NO GAUNTLET. HE'S JUST A ***GUY*** WITH A ***WHIP*** NOW...

I'LL BELIEVE IT WHEN HE'S LOCKED UP. HURRY. AND, EDDIE...? ***THANKS.***

HRN.

ALSO...

...YOU SUCK.

HEH.

YOUR ***MOTHER.***

N-NO! PLEASE!

STOP IT!

DON'T YOU WANT TO *HELP* MARY JANE?

LET'S HELP HER *TOGETHER*--

KRSHHH

HANDS OFF OF HER!!!

I HAVE YOU, ANNA... I HAVE YOU...

KSH

SCHR KKKK KKKT

IT'S OVER.

WHOA!

HEH... SURE IS...

THAT WAS A NICE EXIT.

YOU WIN, MARY JANE WATSON.

DAUGHTER OF PHILIP AND MADELINE WATSON.

THE SPIRAL REMAINS *OPEN*... BUT I DON'T HOLD IT *AGAINST* YOU.

I *STILL* WANT TO HELP YOU.

SHUT UP. YOU'RE DONE.

TAKE ME AWAY. LET ME REST AND *HEAL.*

NOURISH YOUR AUNT ANNA WITH LOVE AND CARE.

STOP TALKING!

AND... OF COURSE, *MAYBELLE PARKER.*

SPIDER-MAN'S AUNT. YOU CALL HIM *PETER* THOUGH.

DO YOU *LOVE* PETER? BOTH OF YOU?

Gchh. SO DO I. WHEN I'M HEALED...WHEN I LEAVE WHATEVER *CAGE* YOU DEVISE...

...I'LL *HELP* PETER.

I'LL HELP HIM *UNDERSTAND...* THE *QUIET.*

AND THEN...

...I'LL SHOW HIM HIS *HEART...* AND SHOVE IT DOWN HIS *THROAT.*

SKLATT!

WAS THAT YOU...?

OR ME?

VENOM! ARE YOU--?

WHERE'S TORMENT?

...

HE FELL.

ANNA AND MAY NEED OUR HELP.

"HELLO?"

"YOU KNOW WHAT I JUST FOUND OUT...?

"LEAVING LIKE *A HUNDRED MESSAGES* AND *NOT* GETTING A TEXT BACK REALLY SUCKS."

"IT WASN'T *PAYBACK*, PETER."

"I KNOW, MJ...I--SORRY, I WAS JUST TRYING TO MAKE A *DUMB JOKE*."

"HUNDRED PERCENT SUCCESSFUL AT THE *DUMB* PART."

"HOW ARE YOU?"

"I SAW *FLASH*. HE CAME BY WITH SOME FOOD.

"HE'S BACK OUT THERE SAVING LIVES, *ALIEN* AND *OTHERWISE*."

"HE CAME OVER? I...

"I THOUGHT YOU WANTED *SPACE--*"

"FLASH IS A *TERRIBLE* LISTENER. HE LISTENED TERRIBLY FOR *HOURS*."

"OH. DID HE TELL YOU ABOUT *EDDIE?*"

"YEAH. WANTED ME-- *US*--TO HEAR IT FROM HIM FIRST.

"HE'S GETTING SOME *LENIENCY* FOR HELPING AT F.E.A.S.T., BUT...

"...HE'S *COOKED.* FOR A *LONG TIME* IF THERE'S ANY *JUSTICE* IN THE WORLD."

"...

"HOW'S *DYLAN* WITH THAT?"

"HE'S BEEN A CLASS-A ROYAL-PAIN *TEENAGER,* SO...GOOD, I GUESS? NORMAL?"

"HEH. GOOD.

"AND WHAT ABOUT *YOU?*"

ANNA'S DOING WELL. SHE'S NOT AS *ROBUST* AS MAY... GOD, I HOPE I HAVE HER RESILIENCE WHEN I'M HER AGE--

*I LET YOU DO THIS NINJA MOVE **ONCE**, NOT **TWICE**.*

WHAT ABOUT *YOU,* MJ?

...

SOMETIMES, EVEN WITH OUR POWERS...

SOMETIMES, WE *CAN'T* SAVE THEM.

YOU *TRIED* TO SAVE *CARNAGE.*

"I DON'T KNOW IF I *SUCCEEDED*, BUT YEAH, I TRIED. IT'S WHAT WE DO.

"WHAT *YOU* DID. YOU *TRIED*.

"RIGHT?"

MJ?

I...I NEED TO HEAR YOU *SAY IT.*

HOW MANY PEOPLE WILL LIVE NOW THAT TORMENT IS GONE?

MJ? SAY YOU *TRIED* TO--

PETER, *STOP.*

THE *GOOD GUYS* WON. LET'S LEAVE IT AT *THAT.*

DAILY BUGLE

KILLING SPREE ENDS TORMENT DEAD

PAGE 2

LET'S LEAVE IT AT *THAT.*

EPILOGUE.
HUDSON VALLEY.

THE SPIRAL IS CLOSING... TIGHTER...

YOUR FIRST COUSIN.

"COUSIN--?"

DID YOU GROW UP TOGETHER?

WERE YOU FRIENDS?

ZIRI, CALL ELAINE.

HELLO, MISTER CRANE. ENJOYING YOUR DRIVE?

YES, ELAINE, THANKS FOR ASKING.

DO ME A FAVOR AND SET UP AN APPOINTMENT WITH DOCTOR PLANCARTE?

I JUST FOUND OUT SOME INTERESTING INFORMATION ABOUT MY... RELATIVES.

TELL HER I WANT TO DO A GENETIC SCREENING.

TO BE CONTINUED...

THE SPIDER'S WEB

ASSISTANT EDITOR: **KAITLYN LINDTVEDT**
ASSOCIATE EDITOR: **TOM GRONEMAN**
EDITOR: **NICK LOWE**

HEY WEB-HEADS,

THUS ENDS "DEATH SPIRAL"! Wow, that really took me for a ride, and I hope my cardiologist forgives me for undoing years of their careful work safeguarding my ventricles and atria! Sorry, Dr. Wirtham! Anyway, the story might be finished, but its effects will be felt for a long time. We deal with a bunch of them in two weeks in AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #28 where guest artist and Stormbreaker CORY SMITH joins us to re-center ourselves after the trauma. We also have a lot to check in on with Raelith, Symbie, and Glitch, as well as one very big dangling plot thread we've been planning on tying off for a while! Bet you don't know which! One of the biggest effects of this current arc is the gentleman we met in ASM #26 and just saw on the last page here! Next stop for him--COMICS GIVEAWAY DAY on May 2nd! WHO IS HE?! Keep reading, True Believer. MEANWHILE, you're going to see more aftershocks in VENOM #258 and in successive issues there. Mary Jane may have saved Aunt Anna, but she is far from unscathed! Finally, you can FINALLY learn the secrets of Torment next month in AMAZING SPIDER-MAN/VENOM: DEATH SPIRAL — BODY COUNT #1, thanks to CHARLES SOULE and KEV WALKER! It's a torturously dark story and will give you the chills and maybe have YOUR cardiologist questioning your life choices too!

We've got tons of plans here, but we're also getting tons of letters from you wonderful Web-Heads!

Hello Spider-Office,

It's been a long time since I wrote in, it feels like. I just got home from deployment, so I felt a lot like Peter in ASM #23 getting reacquainted with Aunt May and Mary Jane. I have to say Peter's reaction to Mary Jane/Venom was funny. I'm not 100% sure I buy the level of freak-out hyperventilating into his mask, but it made me laugh because of Peter's history with the symbiote suit. The story combined with Ed McGuinness' artwork was fantastic--can't wait to see where the story goes with Death Spiral. I don't see how Eddie can't control Carnage if he's the host, but I guess I will have to wait and see.

Keep Thwipping,
Matt Roberts
Fort Carson, Colorado

OH WOW! Welcome home, Matt. Thank you again for your service, and we're very glad you made it home safe. Peter's reaction worked for me--with his overactive imagination and thinking of all the ways that the MJ/Venom pairing could go WRONG! As for Eddie and Carnage, control over a symbiote has been historically shaky at times, and since Eddie was barely sleeping, the control was even more perilous! And now it's nonexistent. Hope the ending landed for you!

True Believers,

I remember clearly the first issue of the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN I bought in 1969 for fifteen cents. It was December 17th and I was out shopping with my mother. I was 4 and I was unsurprisingly attracted to the comic book rack at Osco's drugstore in Iowa City. It was issue #80 of AMAZING SPIDER-MAN, and it was fantastic. I can still remember how great the artwork was in that issue; it really blew me away. I believe that it was done by John Romita Sr. "On the trail of the Chameleon" is implanted in my mind like a brand. I had started reading very young, and my parents and other adults wanted to encourage me. Because of this, I was able to secure every issue of THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN up until eighty by March of 1970 with the help of family and friends. And yes, I even had three, yes THREE, copies of AMAZING FANTASY #15 by the end of that year. This came at a very low cost as I was given many of these issues. Well, that started off the next fifteen years of exclusive Marvel comic book collecting from the Avengers to the Fantastic Four, but Spider-Man was always my favorite. I learned a lot from Spider-Man and Peter Parker throughout those years--most importantly, how to never give up, no matter the odds or the situation. This served me well in the Army!

The combined writing of Spider-Man and Peter Parker's character through those years from 1970 to 1985 (nod to PETER PARKER: THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN and MARVEL TEAM-UP) was something that should be celebrated as remarkable in both its consistency through several writers and in the way the writers collectively shaped Spider-Man and Peter Parker. Importantly, the writers never talked down to the readers and the action perfectly complemented the story. My life was forever changed, and I focused on science and photography for some reason. Yes, we all know Spider-Man is just a fictional character, but thanks to the quality put out by Marvel over the years and continuing today, Spider-Man has become something much more than just a fantasy super hero. I am not sure what life would be like without the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN, but I am sure that it would not be as colorful, as interesting, or as inspiring. I may be 60 now with a lot of life behind me, but I'll never lose that sense of wonder, and that is partially because of the efforts of the folks behind Spider-Man.

I have been subscribing to THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN and THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN for a few years now as well and recently resubscribed to NOVA and the FANTASTIC FOUR. Tonight, I finally had time to sit down and read through the new AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #1–20, and I made it through issue #3 and felt I had to stop and write a letter before continuing. This team with Kelly, Larraz, Gracia, and Caramagna is superb, and the various covers through these twenty issues are all fantastic. I can really see the effort put in behind the storytelling and the artwork. I can't wait to go through the rest of the issues. It's also great to see John Romita Jr. doing some of the best Spider-Man covers I have ever seen and I've seen a lot of covers! So thank you for the ongoing greatness, the storytelling, and the visual poetry. The world would be a much less amazing place without the stories of Spider-Man.

P.S. Is there anywhere I can get that FOOM poster I once got at the Madison Avenue office of Marvel Comics back in 1975? Probably not, but I had to ask.

Daniel Brennan
Bronx, NY

Thank you so much for writing in, Daniel! What a great letter. ASM #80 is a terrific comic with a killer John Romita Sr. cover, but it was a rare John Buscema Spider-Man interior job (with inks from Jim Mooney and some face work from John Romita if I had to guess). Hearing about your journey was a blessing, and we truly appreciate the devotion and will do our level best to keep it up! Hearing the John Romita Jr. love is always music to this fanboy's ears! And I'll look around and see if we can find a FOOM poster! I don't think we have any, but who knows!

Okay! Out of time here, so we'll leave it at that. See you on May 2nd for COMICS GIVEAWAY DAY and then back on May 6th for ASM #28!!! Off to the doctor's office to see what damage I've done to the ol' ticker!

Keep Thwippin'!
Nick Lowe
Spider-Editor
Astoria, NY

Email us at **SPIDEYOFFICE@MARVEL.COM** and mark your messages **"Okay to Print"** for a chance to see them answered in future issues!

NEXT

the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN

#28

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